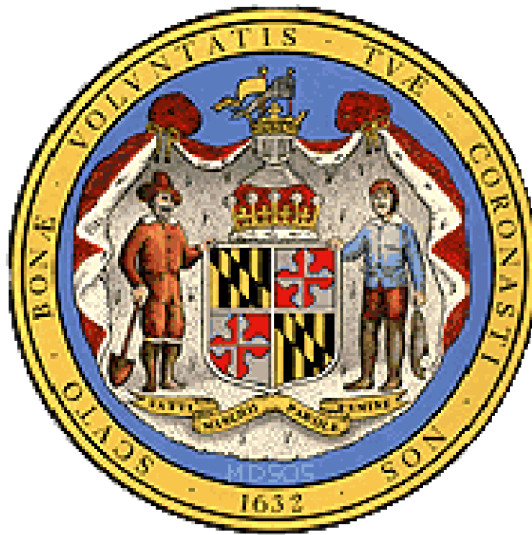


# Maryland Public Information Act Manual



Office of the Attorney General

Douglas F. Gansler  
Attorney General

*Thirteenth Edition*  
2014

# MARYLAND PUBLIC INFORMATION ACT MANUAL

OFFICE OF THE  
MARYLAND ATTORNEY GENERAL

DOUGLAS F. GANSLER  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

200 Saint Paul Place  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

*Thirteenth Edition*  
2014

## PREFACE

The public's right to information about government activities lies at the heart of a democratic government. Maryland's Public Information Act grants the people of this State a broad right of access to public records while protecting legitimate governmental interests and the privacy rights of individual citizens.

The Attorney General's Office has long sought to ensure that the Public Information Act is implemented correctly and consistently throughout State government. The previous editions of this manual became recognized as a valuable resource for government officials seeking to meet their responsibilities under the Act and for members of the press and public seeking access to information.

Credit for this edition is owed to numerous individuals affiliated with the Office over the years in that each new edition of the Manual attempts to build on the strengths of prior editions. Special thanks, however, are owed to former Deputy Attorney General, later Judge, Dennis M. Sweeney for his work in preparing the first several editions of this manual and to former Assistant Attorneys General Jack Schwartz and Robert N. McDonald (now Judge McDonald) who assumed responsibility for subsequent editions. This most recent edition has been produced under the direction of Assistant Attorney General Adam D. Snyder, Chief Counsel, Opinions and Advice. Special thanks are also owed to Deborah P. Spence, who prepared and finalized the manuscript.

Finally, I want to thank the local government officials, members of the private bar, and representatives of the media who have offered many constructive suggestions for the manual.

This Thirteenth Edition reflects the recodification of the Act in the new General Provisions Article and includes other statutory changes through the latest sessions of the General Assembly as well as noteworthy developments in the case law and the opinions of this office. The Manual is maintained in an on-line format at <http://www.oag.state.md.us/Opengov/pia.htm>. I trust that you will find this new Thirteenth Edition and subsequent updates a valuable resource.

*Douglas F. Gansler  
Attorney General  
October 2014*

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